

THE  
SAINTS<sup>9</sup>  
Solemne Covenant  
WITH THEIR GOD.

As it was opened in a Sermon preached at BECCLES  
in the Countie of Suffolk, at the taking of the Nationall  
Covenant there, by the Ministers and other  
Officers of that Division.

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BY  
IOH: BRINSLEY Minister of the Word at  
*Great Tarmouth.*

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I E R. 50. 5.

*Come and let us joyne our selves unto the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, that  
shall not be forgotten.*



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SALIENTS  
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B Y  
John Brinsley Minister of the Word at  
Great Taverham

L E R . 20 . 2 .  
This small tract is printed and sold by the Author at the Stationers' Hall, London, and  
also at the following places.



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*To the much honoured,*

**SIR JOHN WENTWORTH, and SIR JOHN ROWSE**

*Knights: With the rest of the Right Worshipfull the  
Commissioners for the Countie of Suffolke,  
Councell and Strength.*

**RIGHT WORSHIPFULL,**



Y the appointment, and in the presence of  
some of you was this *Sermon* preached. And  
at the like request it is now published toge-  
ther with an addition of a *Supplement* to  
the *Applicatorie* part, which was then  
through straitnesse of time left imperfect.

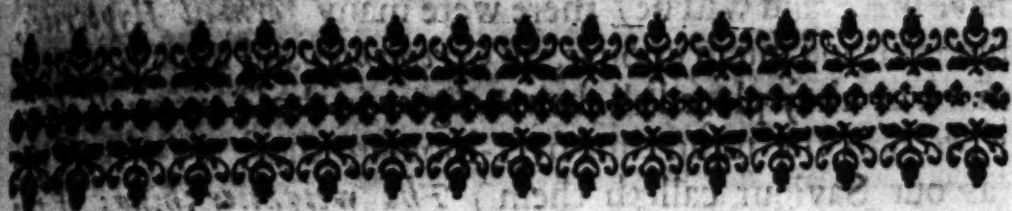
My ayme in both was, and is to promote  
the *publique service* of the *Kingdome*, and in particular the ser-  
vice of that *day*. If herein I have not done what haply some  
would have had me, by speaking their *conceptions*, I would  
have them and the world know, I have done what I concei-  
ved most *expedient* for the promoting of the service which  
then I was put upon, and (as far as I apprehend) the *great de-  
signe* of the *Kingdome*. That I have herein concealed my own  
*private judgement* in the point of *Church Government*, It is not  
because I am *afraid* or *ashamed* to give account of it, but only  
that

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

that I might not by an *unreasonable* anticipation of the judgement of that *venerable Assembly* now convened for the deciding and stating of that controversy, both render my selfe *seemingly presumptuous*, and lay blocks in my own way, by sowing of *scruples*, which my worke was to *remove* and *pull up*. What *success* God was pleased to give unto my poore labours at that time, some of you are witnesses. My hopes are, that being not altogether *unsuccessfull* in the *hearing*, they may prove not wholly *unusefull* in the *reading*. Such as they are, I presume to put them into your *hands*, laying both them and my selfe at the *Churches feet*.

Whose I am, and ever shall be

JOH: BRINSLEY.



THE  
SAINTS  
SOLEMNE  
COVENANT.

PSAL. 50. 5.

*Gather my Saints together unto me, those that  
have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice.*

**T**He same occasion that hath this day brought  
you together in this place, hath also brought this  
Text to my hand. Wherein (as *Expositors* for the  
most part conceive of it) you have a generall  
*Citation*, or *Protese* issuing out of the high Court  
of Heaven against the Church and people of the Jews, sum-  
moning and requiring them to come and appeare before the  
Tribunall of the great God, there to make answer to some-  
what that should be objected against them. The Quarrell in  
brief was this. In that Church (as in every Church there ever



Mat. 23.  
23.

have been, and will be) there were many *formall Hypocrites*, such as stood much upon *legall Ceremonies* and *Sacrifices*, in so much as they placed all their Religion in those *externall observances*, in the meantime *over-looking* those *weightier things* of the Law; *Judgement*, *Mercie* and *Faith* (or *Faithfulnessesse*,) with the exercises of true *Pitie*, and *Charitie* not regarding the true inward *Spirituall worship* and service of God. Hereupon the Lord by his Prophet here cites and summons the whole Church to come, and give an account of the general *formalitie*. *Gather my Saints together unto me*, &c.

In the words we might take notice of two particulars: the *Processe*, and the *Persons*. The *Processe*, or *Citation* it selfe in the first words, *Gather together unto me* (or *before me*.) The *Persons* cited, summoned, you have them here described, first, by their *Quality*, they were *Saints*, Gods *Saints*. *Gather my Saints together unto me.* Secondly, by their *Act*, they were *Covenanters*; which *Act* is amplified by the *Manner* and *Solemnitie* of it, they were such as had made a *Covenant* with their God, and that a *solemne Covenant*, *Those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.*

It is this last branch of the Text that my eye is upon at this time, being led to it by the present occasion; wherein you have the *Saints* of God described so as if they had made a *Covenant*, a *solemne Covenant* with their God. [*Those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.*]

By *Sacrifice*,] *Guales Zubach*, (saith the Originall) *Super Sacrificium*, *Over Sacrifice*. This Clause is diversely construed by divers *Expositors*, some carrying it one way, some another, according to a threefold interpretation of the preceding word *Saints*.

1 By *Saints* some here understand the *righteous people* of God among the *Jews*, the select company of *True* or *holy* people.

Taking the word in that sense, they conceive this latter clause to be a description of them. They were such as had made a *Covenant with God over Sacrifice*; that is (say they) *over* and *besides* Sacrifice, or *in stead* of Sacrifice. So they explain the words, *super Sacrificium*, i.e. *præter Sacrificium*, or *pro Sacrificio*. Besides Sacrifice, they were such as did not rest themselves contented in any Legall Ceremonie; they did not *subsist in ceremoniâ umbris* (as Calvin speaks,) *sit down in these shadows*; they apprehended that there was *aliquid altius*, somewhat of a *higher nature* in the Covenant betwixt God and his people, and that they mainly looked at, and applied themselves unto. Or *in stead* of Sacrifice. In stead of those legall sacrifices, and ceremoniall observances, (wherein the greatest part placed all their Religion,) they consecrated themselves unto the Lord, gave up themselves unto God by a *solemne Covenant*. In stead of those *dead and unreasonable* Sacrifices, of *Rom. 12.* *bruit beasts*, they offered up unto God that *living service*; that *living sacrifice* (as the Apostle describes the Sacrifices of Christians) that *Reasonable service*; devoting themselves to the true inward spirituall worship and service of God, whereunto they had bound themselves by *solemne Vow and Covenant*. This Exposition I find Calvin and Melancthon after him, not wholly disallowing. Others in the second place, taking the word [*Saints*] in a quite contrary sense, understanding by it *formall Hypocrites*, (who are here called by the name of *Saints*, either by way of *irony*, or else because they were such *seemingly*, as the Apostle saith of them) *feared and sought saints outwardly* in the outward appearance. *Saints* by profession, they look upon this latter clause as a *character* of them. They were such as had made a *Covenant with God, over Sacrifice, or with, or by Sacrifices*, whereas (say they) they sacrificed Sacrifice to God, as if that had been all that his Covenant required, which when they

*Species I-  
ronia sub-  
est quoad  
degeneres  
& simu-  
latores In-  
daos.*

*Calv. ad  
loc.*



Ex opere  
operato  
putant  
se Deo  
placere,  
Sculdet.  
ad loc.

they had done, they now thought that God could not but be well pleased with them; nay, they thought that hereby they had tied and bound God after a sort unto them, viz. by their Sacrifices. A true Character of a *formall Hypocrite*, who so pleaseth himself in the *opus operatum* of a dutie, as that hee thinketh God cannot but be well pleased with it. He so looks upon his services and duties, as if God were beholding to him for them, and obliged to him by them. Thus *Sculdetur*, and some others here carrie it. But not content in either of these: There is yet a third, and a last sense, which I rather incline unto, apprehending it both more *simple* and *genuine*. The persons to whom this Citation is here directed they were not any *select* company, whether of *True Warriours*, or *Formall Hypocrites*, but the *whole body* of the *Jewish Church*, collectively considered, consisting of both these, yet here called by the name of *Saints*. Because there were some, and no question many such amongst them, *Saints* in truth as well, as in appearance. Now the determination here (as often elsewhere) is taken from the better part. It is an honour (saith Calvin, writing upon the Text, which God putteth upon his *Saints*, to denominate a *promiscuous multitude* consisting of good and bad from them, I, though they be the far lesse number. That was the case here in the Text. In the *Jewish Church* at this time, the greatest part were no better then *formall Hypocrites*, yet in as much as there was a partie of *Saints* amongst them, God calleth them all by this name. Secondly, If they were not all *Saints*, yet they ought to have been so. They were all *Saints* by calling, called to be *Saints*, and so called *Saints*, and that to put them in mind of their *Dutie*, what ones they all ought to be. Now taking the word in this sense, we shall finde this subsequent clause to be a description generally of all the *visible members* of that *visible Church*, they were such as had made a *Covenant with God over Sacrifice, with Sacrifice, by Sacrifice.*

For



For the full and cleere understanding whereof wee might take notice of an ancient custome in use both amongst the people of the Jews, and other Nations also, who were wont in their making of Covenants, for the greater solemnity of them, to make them, with or by Sacrifice. Which they did after this manner. Having slain the Sacrifice they divided, laying the parts one over against the other, and so the Covenanters went between them. Thus the Lord himself (who was the first instituter of this Ceremonie) made a Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 15. Intending there to make a solemnè Covenant with him, he directeth Abraham what to do, viz. Take an Heighfer, Ver. 9, 10. and a Goat and a Ram, &c. And what should he do with them? Why divide them in pieces, parting them asunder, laying the parts one against the other. And to what end was this? Why that the Lord might passe betwixt them, which accordingly he did in that visible signe of a Burning Lampe in the midst of a smoaking furnace, Ver. 17. Behold a smoaking furnace and a Burning Lampe passed between those pieces. Thus did God make this Covenant with Abraham, a Covenant with, or By Sacrifice.

And thus the Lords people, the people of the Jews, were wont to make Covenant with him. Bringing a Sacrifice before the Lord they cut it in pieces, and so passed betwixt the parts. Such a Covenant the Lord putteth the Princes and People of Israel in minde of that they had made with him, Jer. 34. 18. The Covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the Calf in twain, and passed betweene the parts thereof. This it seemeth was their Custome, which as they took it from God himself, so the Heathens borrowed it from them, who were wont to make their Covenants also after the same manner. *Et cuspâ jungebant fœdera Porcâ. Killing, and cutting a Swine in pieces. (Similis labris lactuca, a fit Sacrifice for such Sacrificers) they struck their Covenants.* And from this Custome

Ayns-  
worth,

snr. Psal.

25. 10.

Pf. 89. 3.

(as our *Aynsworth* elsewhere wel observes it) cometh that phrase of *Striking or Cutting a Covenant*. I have made a Covenant with my chosen, (saith the Lord, *Psal. 89.*) The Originall hath it, *Karati Berith, Exciōs fadus* (as *Montanus* renders it) I have Cut or Struck a Covenant. Which phrase is also here retained in the Text. *Those that have made a Covenant, Corerbi Berithi, Ferientes Pactum*, that have Cut or Struck a Covenant by Sacrifice, viz. by cutting of the Sacrifice and parting it a sunder have made a covenant with me.

Doct.

Such a Covenant had the people of the Jews entered and made with their God, a Covenant, and a Solemne Covenant. And such a Covenant must all the Lords People enter with their God, all that would be owned and acknowledged of God as his People, as his Saints, they must strike Covenant, and a Solemne Covenant with their God. Upon these two I shall insist severally, briefly by way of *Explication*, putting them together in the *Application*.

1

The Lords people are all Covenanters, such as have struck a Covenant with God. Such were the members of the Jewish Church; and such are the true members of Christian Churches. A truth which needeth no confirmation. This it is that gives both *Esse*, and *Distinguere*, that maketh a people to be Gods people, and distinguisheth them from all other people; Even the Covenant betwixt God and them. This it was that distinguished the seed of *Abraham*, and the people of the Jews from all other people in the World, and that made them Gods people, even the Covenant betwixt God and them, the signe and seale whereof they carried in their flesh, the Seale of Circumcision, which is therefore called *The Covenant*. My Covenant shall be in your flesh: that is a signe of the Covenant. And this it is that now distinguisheth the true Church of Christ, and the true members thereof from all others, even the Covenant betwixt God and them; the signes and seals whereof

Gen. 17.

13.



# Solemne Covenant.

7

whereof are the two *Sacraments* of the new Testament, *Baptisme*, and the *Lords Supper*; both *Seals* of this Covenant; the one of their *entrance* into Covenant, the other of their *continuance* in that Covenant.

2. For the opening and illustrating of this, the Question will be, *What is this Covenant betwixt God and his People?*

Q.

1. To this the Prophet *Jeremy* will return us an answer in a few words, *Jer. 31. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, &c. I will be their God, and they shall be my*

A.

33 *People*; This is the Covenant which God maketh with them; and from thence we may easily learne what is the Covenant that they make with him; the one being but a *Counterpaine* to the other, viz. *That he shall be their God, and they will be his People*. It is the nature of *Covenants* to be *mutuall*. And such is the Covenant betwixt God and his people, consisting of two parts, the Covenant on *Gods part*, and the Covenant on *their parts*.

The Covenant on *Gods part* is, that *hee will be their God, and they shall be his People*. So ran the Covenant that God made with *Abraham*. *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*; And such is the Covenant that God maketh with his Church and people in all ages, (it being still one and the same Covenant for substance) viz. that *hee will be their God, Their God*? What is that? Nay, what is it not? their *Father*, their *King*, their *Saviour*, their *Deliverer*, their *All*, a *God*, *Al sufficient*; *Gen. 17* such a one he is in himself, and such a one he will shew himself to all that are in Covenant with him: And *They shall be his People*, acknowledged of him, favoured by him: Hee will pardon their sins, hee will *heale* their *infirmities*, supply their wants, sanctifie their *natures*, bestowing upon them all good things requisite for the. That is the Covenant on *Gods part*.

But what is the Covenant on *his Peoples part*? That is the Covenant we have now principally to deal with. That Cove-



nant wherein the Lords people do bind themselves unto him. Now this is nothing but an *Eccho* to the other, a *Restipulation*. When the hearts of a people come to close with God, taking him for their God, and giving up themselves to him to be his people: When to Gods [*I will be your God, and you shall be my People*] their Souls *Eccho* backe again [*Lord, Thou shalt be our God, and we will be thy People.*] Now is this Covenant made up. Such was the Covenant that *Jacob* promised to renew with his God upon his safe returne from his journey, *Gen. 28. If the Lord will be with mee, &c. so that I return safe to my fathers house, &c. Then shall the Lord be my God.* Now what is it for a people to take God for their God? Why to engage themselves in the *solemn Vow*, purpose, and resolution of their hearts that they will *set him up as God*, and that both in their *Hearts*, and *Lives*, giving all those respects unto him which are due to a God, *viz.* to *Love* him above all, to *Feare* him above all, to *Trust* in him above all, to *Worship* him according to his will, to *walk* before him in the conscionable endeavour of an *universall obedience*. This it is for a man to take God for his God. And this must all the Lords people doe, striking such a Covenant with God, even a *Covenant of Obedience*. Such was the Covenant which the *Israelites* entred with their God at the giving of the *Law*. Upon *Moses* his coming downe from the Mount, having received the *Tables of the Covenant*, and the *Book of the Covenant*, (the *Morall, Judiciall, and Ceremoniall Laws*) from God, he calleth the people to enter a *Covenant* with God. And what was that *Covenant*? Why a *Covenant of Obedience*. He read the *Book of the Covenant* in their eares; And the People said, *All that the Lord hath said we will do it, and be obedient.* This was the *Covenant*, for the confirming whereof *Moses* then sprinkled upon them the *bloud of the Covenant*, *viz.* the *Bloud of the Sacrifices* wherewith they made that *Covenant*. And such

Gen. 28  
21.

Ex. 24.  
7.

such a Covenant it is that all the Lords people have made, and are to make with their God: A Covenant, and that

A *solemne* Covenant, a word of that, and but a word, my time being chiefly at the *application*. Such a Covenant it was that the people of the *Jews* had made and often renewed with their God, not a *slight* but a *solemne* Covenant, a Covenant with *Sacrifice*. Many were the *Sacrifices* instituted by God, and observed by his people under the old Testament. Of these *Sacrifices*, as there were divers *kinds*, so there were divers *ends* and *uses*. Amongst other, this was common to them all, they were all as so many *figilla*, *syngrapha*, so many *signes* and *seals* of the Covenant betweene God and his People. *Signes*, *Commemorative* signes and tokens, putting them in mind of the Covenant. *Seals* for confirmation of that Covenant, the Covenant on Gods part, the Covenant on *their* part. *On Gods part*. Hereby did God assure them that hee would be their God. *On their part*. Hereby did they binde themselves unto him that they would be his people. This was one common end of all their *Sacrifices*, the proper and particular end of some of them.

These *Sacrifices* they are now ceased: But in the meantime God hath not left his Church without *signes* and *seals* of this Covenant. Such are the *Sacraments* of the *New Testament*; *Baptisme* and the *Lords Supper*; both *seals* of this Covenant, the one (as I told you) a Seal of our *Entrance* into it, the other of our *continuance* in it. And *with* or by these doe the Lords people now strike a Covenant with their God: Giving themselves to the Lord in *Baptisme*, they confirme that gift in the receiving of the *Supper*, both which are appurtenances to this Covenant, annexed to it as for the *vestification*, and *confirmation*, so for the *solemnization* of it. I mighte adde *Christians* now, as they have their *Sacraments*, so also have they their *Sacrifices*, their *Propitiatorie* Sacrifice, and their *Eucharisticall*



- Heb. 9.*  
 26 Sacrifices. Their *Propitiatorie Sacrifice*, viz. *Christ* himself the substance of all those Ceremoniall shadows, at whom all the Legall Sacrifices looked. Their *Eucharisticall Sacrifices*, their *Spiritual Sacrifices* of *Prayers* and *Prayses*, and other *spirituall Oblations*, which as *spirituall Priests* they offer up unto God. Now by and with those Sacrifices they are to make their Covenant with their God.
- 1 Pet. 2. 5*
- Heb. 8. 6* I By and through that *Invisible*, that *Propitiatory Sacrifice*, the *Lord Jesus Christ*, who is the *Mediatour* of this Covenant, bringing God and man together, and that by by *Passing* (as I may say) betwixt the Parties. An observable difference betwixt those Sacrifices and this Sacrifice. There the Covenanters passed betwixt the parts of the Sacrifice: Here the Sacrifice passeth betwixt the Covenanters. *Christ* interposing himself as a middle person betwixt two disagreeing parties, bringing them together; *Reconciling* God to man, and man to God; first, *meriting*, then *applying* that *Reconciliation*. And by and through him it is that Christians are now to make this Covenant with God, viz. with an eye to *Jesus Christ* the *Mediatour* of this Covenant; Taking God for their God in *Christ*, and giving up themselves to be his people in *Christ*. Thus are they to Covenant by *Christ*, and (as I may say) *over Christ*. Even as under the Law, the person that came to offer a *Burnt offering* to the Lord, to make an *Attenuement* for his sin, (and so to renew his Covenant with God) he was to stand over his Sacrifice, putting his hand upon the head thereof, thereby disburdening himself of his sin, and laying it upon the Sacrifice. Even thus now under the Gospel, Christians comming to make or renew their Covenant with God, they must bring a Sacrifice with them, even the *Lord Christ*; (represented & shadowed out by those typical Sacrifices) presenting him unto God his Father, withall, laying their hands upon the head of that Sacrifice, by faith resting & relying
- Lev. 1. 4*
- ing



ing upon Jesus Christ, upon the merit of his death and obedience, for the pardon of all their sins, the acceptation of their persons, the salvation of their souls. Having thus layed their hands upon this Sacrifice, now are they to make a Covenant with God, a *Covenant of obedience*. And thus may they be said to *Covenant By and Over Sacrifice*.

2. And as *Over*, so with *Sacrifice*. As over this *Propitiatory*, so with *Gratulatory* Sacrifice. Such a Sacrifice it is the Psalmist calleth for from this Covenanting people in the fourteenth Verse of this Psalm. *Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high: And call upon mee in the day of trouble, Verse 15.* These are *Evangelicall* Sacrifices, more worth then all the Sacrifices of the Law, *Prayers* and *Prayses*. And these Sacrifices must they offer up that will make a Covenant with God; so making a *Covenant with Sacrifice*. But my promise was not to give way to doctrinall Enlargements. The service of the day calleth for *Application*, which let it be directed only by way of *Exhortation*, whereof Take these three Branches.

1. *That wee would all of us strike such a Covenant with our God.*
2. *That having struck this Covenant, wee would be mindfull of it.*
3. *That being mindfull of it, wee would be faithfull in it.*

Begin with the first, which putteth us all upon this act of *Covenanting*. As many of us as desire to be owned of God as his people, let us strike a *Covenant*, a *solemne Covenant* with him. This is that which the Prophet *Jeremy* saith of the children of *Israel*, and the children of *Juda* returning out of captivity should doe, and excite one another to doe it. *Jer. 50.* *Come (shall they say) and let us joine our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.* And this in the feare of God let all of us here present this day doe, and encourage

courage one another to do it. Come let us joyne our selves unto the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.

*Object.* Why but happily you may say, what needs this Exhortation to a people that are in Covenant with God, already? This work is not now to doe; we have all of us done it already. We have given up our names, and wee have given up our selves unto the Lord. This we have done in Baptisme; and this wee have done in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, both Stals of this Covenant. Thus are we a people in Covenant with God already.

*Ans.* And were not the children of Israel, and the children of Juda so? They were a people in Covenant with God before, and in their captivity, being the seed of Abraham, and carrying the seal of the Covenant in their flesh. Yet for all that wee finde them there taking up thoughts and resolutions of *joyning* themselves to the Lord in a Covenant, and that by *renewing* the same Covenant.

A practice frequent amongst the people of God in the old Testament. Many instances wee meet with, holding forth to us *presidents* for this practice, the *renewing of Covenant*. This we find the people of God doing upon divers occasions. Specially in these two cases.

### Defection.

In case of

### Affliction.

In case of *Defection* when by falling away from God they had broken this Covenant. Secondly, In case of *Affliction*, when having broken his Covenant, the Judgements of God were out against them, either present or imminent, feared or felt. In these cases we shall see them ordinarily applying themselves to this Remedic, the *renewing of Covenant*. Take but two instances for both; the first of *Asah*, the second of *Hezekiah*, both obvious. The former 2 *Chron.* 15. There you



# Solemne Covenant

+13

you shall finde King *Asah* and his people making a *solemne Covenant with God*: *Verse 12.* And they entred into a Cove- 2 Chron.  
*nant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, withall their heart, and* 15. 12.  
*with all their soul, &c.* This they did, and upon what occasi-  
 on did they it? Why, at that time they stood guiltie of a  
 great *Defection*; so you have it, *Verse 3.* Now for a long time Ver. 3.  
*Israel hath bin without the true God, and without a teaching Priest,*  
*and without Law.* A wonderfull defection; And behold *Af-*  
*liction* following it, great *Affliction*, great *Distraction*, great  
*vexation*; so it follows. *Verse 5.* And in those times there was Ver. 5.  
*no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great*  
*vexations were upon the inhabitants of the Countries.* Such was  
 their condition. In this condition what course take they?  
 Why they apply themselves to this as the most *sovereigne*  
*remedie, They entred into a Covenant to seek the Lord their God,*  
*&c.*

The like did *Hezekiah*, as you may see in the 29 chapter of  
 the same Book. Now it is in mine heart to make a *Covenant*,  
 (saith *Hezekiah*) *Verse 10.* Not a *Personall*, but a *Nationall* 2 Chron.  
*Covenant.* And what occasioned it? Why first, the King- 29. 10.  
 dome at that time lay under the guilt of a great *Defection*: The  
*Worship of God* had been neglected, the *Temple* ruinous and pol-  
 luted: So you have it in the 6 and 7 Verses of that Chapter, Ver. 6.  
*Our fathers have trespassed and done that which was evill in the*  
*eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have tur-*  
*ned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned*  
*their backs;* Also they have shut up the doores of the *Porch*, and  
*put out the Lamps;* and have not burnt *Incense*, nor offered burnt  
*offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.* Thus was the Ver. 15  
*Temple-worship* neglected, the place unfrequented, nay polluted.  
 In the fifth Verse of the Chapter, *Hezekiah* calls for the *Le-*  
*vites*, requiring them to sanctifie themselves, and to sanctifie the  
*house of the Lord*, and to carry forth the filthinesse out of the holy  
 place.



place. Lying under this great Defection, they were also under great affliction; So it followeth, Verse 8, 9. *Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them unto trouble, to astonishment, and unto hissing. For loe our Fathers have saine by the sword, and our sonnes, and our daughters, and our wives are in Captivity for this.* Such was their present condition. And hereupon it is that that worthy Reformer betakes himselfe, and his people to this course, the renewing of Covenant. Now it is in my heart to make a Covenant, &c.

To these instances (if need were) I might adde that other in the days of Nehemiah. The people were generally guiltie of a great Defection. So much the Levites in their names confesse, and acknowledge. *Nehem. 9. 34, 35. Wee have done wickedly: Neither have our Kings, nor our Princes, our Priests, nor our Fathers kept thy Law, &c. For they have not served thee in their Kingdom, and in thy great goodnesse that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them. That Defection was followed with great Affliction: so you have in the Verses following. Behold we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our Fathers to eat the fruit thereof, &c. behold wee are servants in it: And it yieldeth much increase to the Kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattell at their pleasure, And we are in great distresse. Now in this condition, behold them betaking themselves to the same course. And because of all this wee make a sure Covenant, and write it, and our Princes, Levites, and Priests seal unto it. Verse 38.*

This were they wont to doe upon these occasions. Now whether there be the same occasions to be found amongst us, us of this Nation, or no, I suppose there is none of us here present, will make any question of it. Alas the Evidence is but too cleer, and that as for our present Affliction, so for our former Defection; the one of which usually attends upon the other; Af-

# Solennne Covenant.

15

*Affliction upon Defection*, so you find it in all the places fore-mentioned; and so we (at least many of our brethren) in this Kingdome finde it by sad and wofull experience at this day. Our *Defection* went before, and that a great *Defection*. The *Temple of God* amongst us scoured (blessed be God) the *doors* thereof were not shut up, yet we cannot say but it was *polluted*, and that by bringing in *humane Inventions* to thrust out *divine Ordinances*. The *Lamps* some of them *extinguished*, and put out, the most of them *burning dim*, either for want of *oile*, or *snuffing*. How few *Burning and shining Lamps*? The *Worship of God* for the most part how was it turned to a meer *Formalitie*? our condition therein being but too like that of *Israels* herein the Text; little to be seene in most places but a *meagre*, the meager carcasse of a cold and formall devotion, The *heart of Religion* being well nigh eaten out: Little *power* of it to be found in the *hearts and lives* of the greatest part. Multitudes of *scandalous* persons swarming every where, and yet continued members of the Church. *Swearers, Drunkards, Ps. 50. 17* *Unclean Persons, Profane Persons*, such as *hated Reformation*, yet even they *taking the Covenant of God* (the Seal of his Covenant) *in their mouthes*, polluting the holy Ordinances of God by their unworthy partaking in them. For the rest, how have the greatest part been either meerly *Civill*, or else *Luke-warme*. Little *Heare*, little *Life*, little *Power of Godlinesse* to be felt or seene. Surely our *Defection*, and our *Provocations* have beene great. And our *Affliction* at this day seemes to answer it. Our case being now the very same with *Israels* in the days of King *Asah*; *In those times there was no peace to him* <sup>2 Chron.</sup> *that went out, nor to him that came in; but great vexations were upon* <sup>15. 5, 6.</sup> *all the Inhabitants of the Countries; And Nation was destroyed of Nation, and Citie of Citie, for God did vex them with all adversity.* So was it with them: And is it not so with us at this day? Now, in this condition, what shall wee doe? Why, Now let us joyne our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant.



Now, never was Covenant more seasonable, more needfull for any people, then it is for England at this day. Let us now make a Covenant with the Lord our God, and that a *Perpetuall Covenant*. Covenants wee have made, but alas they have beene *temporary*, *momentanie*, soone forgotten. Let us now joine our selves to the Lord in a *perpetuall Covenant* that shall not be forgotten. No way so hopefull as this to appease the wrath that is gone out, smoking against us, and burning amongst us, to put an end to our present *Afflictions*, and *Distractions*, to remove the Evils which we feel, to prevent the judgments which we fear, to procure the mercies which we want, to continue the mercies wee enjoyne, to stay our God amongst us.

Object.

Ob. True (you may say), were it onely such a Covenant, a *joyning our selves to the Lord in a Covenant*, then might wee hope for such an issue. But alas this Covenant here propounded and tendered to us, wee finde it to be of another nature, containing in it somthings to us *impertinent*, and others scarce *warrantable*.

[A.]

A. Here I know some thing will be expected by way of satisfaction. Give me leave as briefly & as fully as I may, or can, *Liberare animam to discharge conscience*, both mine own & others, by resolving such scruples as are most obvious, and (as I conceive) of greatest importance. In the *Generall* take the resolution thus. Though this be not the *only* thing in this Covenant, yet I take it (and so would I have every one here present to looke upon it) to be the *mayne*, viz. *The joyning of our selves, and the whole Kingdome to the Lord*. What else means this grand *Designe* of a *through Reformation*, a *Personall*, a *Nationall Reformation* Personall of our own hearts, *lives*, *Families*: *Nationall* of the *Kingdom*, the *three Kingdoms*. The former we promise to performe, the latter we engage our selves by all lawfull ways in our severall places, and Stations



to endeavour. And what is this but a *Joyning our selves to the Lord by Covenant.*

Some particulars, I confesse, here may be found, which at the first sight may seeme to be *heterogeneall*; some of them *Forraigne*, and others of them of *inuerCivill* concernment, but upon a review we shal find most of them (if not all of them) to lie in a way of *tendency* unto that great and maine end, (like so many lesser *streams* which though happily they have their severall windings and turnings, yet at the length they all discharge and unload themselves into the same common *Chan-nell*) All of them conducing either *Immediately* or *mediatly* to the promoting of this desired *Reformation.*

1 To this purpose tends that first branch of the *first Article*, where wee promise to endeavour the *preservation* of the *Reformed Religion* in the *Church of Scotland* against the *C O M-M O N E N E M Y*. A clause which seemeth to look directly upon *them*, but withall it reflects and looks back upon *us*, who are much intersted & concerned in their (whether *woe*, or) *welfare*. In their *peace* we may the rather hope for *peace*. In their *Ruine* we cannot look long to *survive*. Such are the mutuall *engagements* and *concerments* of both Kingdomes, as that in all *probabilitie* they are like to *stand* or *fall*, *sinke* or *swim* together. And such is that other Clause in the Close of the same *Article*, where wee promise to endeavour the *bringing* of all the *Churches* in the *three Kingdomes* to the *nearest conjunction*, and *uniformitie* in *Religion*, *Government*, &c. A *Designe* of high concernment. No one thing tending more directly to the *setting* and *establishing* of the true *Religion* of God in all of them.

2 To like purpose is the obligation in that *second Article*, which ingageth all to endeavour the *extirpation* of *Papery*, and the *eradicating* of such other *evill weeds*, as may endanger the *flourishing* out the *heart* of *Religion*; how ever hinder the *growth* of it.

3 To

3 To the same purpose, (as truly; though not so immediately) tends that iugagement in the third Article, for the *mutuall preservation of the RIGHTS and PRIVILEGES of PARLIAMENTS, and the Liberties of the Kingdoms,* with the joint-preservation and defence of his Majesties *person and authoritie.* Which, of what concernment they are for the establishing, and preserving of the true Religion of God, I shall not need to tell you. The Laws, and just Liberties of a Kingdome, they are as the *outworks to Religion.* If these be surprized, or stormed, taken in, it is not to bee expected that Religion should long hold out. And therefore not onely expediencie, but necessitie requires, that they should be taken into the same counsels with Religion it selfe. Of these Laws, and Liberties, the Kings Majestie with his Parliaments, are by office the proper Guardians, the grand Conservatours. Great Reason then their should be a speciall respect had unto them upon whom under God wee have such an immediate dependence either for our *welfare, or woe.*

I might go on, and shew you the like in the three other Articles. The *discovery of Incendiaries,* persons dangerous to the Church, or dangerous to the State, such as shall seeke and endeavour the *breeding, or fomenting of Divisions* in either, and consequently indanger the Ruine of both; of which you may read, *Article 4.*

The endeavour of *preserving the Civill Peace and Union betwixt the two Kingdoms,* a mercy denied to our Forefathers, now settled and established by the mutuall agreement of both Parliaments, spoken of *Article 5.*

The mutuall defence and assistance of all that are or shall be *confederated with us,* in the lawfull pursuit of this Covenant, mentioned, *Article 6.*

All these how conducive they are to the *maine end* here propounded, I suppose there is none that looketh right upon them



them with an impartiall and unprejudiced eye, but will readily see. And being *subservient* thereunto, no reason why any should scruple the admittance of them within the verge and pale of a *Religious Covenant*.

Ob. Why, but it may be said; In this *Covenant* there are *Object*: some things which may seem not onely *heterogeneous* to Religion, but *incompatible* and inconsistent with it: Passages Subject to just scruple, which a tender conscience cannot but stumble at. In the taking of an *Oath* there are three main requisites. Wee finde them all together in that knowne Text, *Ier. 4. Thou shalt sweare the Lord liveth. in Truth, in Iudgment, and in Righteousnesse.* Now, as for the *first* of these (may some say) it is possible to observe it; (and I wish it may be so by all that shall adventure upon this *Covenant* this day) *viz.* to sweare in *Truth*, in the uprightness, and sinceritie of the heart; But how the *second*? how the *third*? How in *Iudgment*? how in *Righteousnesse*?

*Alleg. 1.* How in *Iudgment*? When as there are some particulars here, which the greatest part understand not, know not what they mean. Such is the *Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland*; And such are the *Rights and Priviledges of Parliaments*, with the *Liberties of the Kingdomes*; things which the greatest part are wholly, or in a great part ignorant of. And how can they engage themselves to defend and maintain what they know not.

*A.* Answer; as well as to maintain the *Laws of the Land*, or the *Prerogatives of the Prince*; neither of which are obvious to every vulgar eye, few having an exact and distinct cognizance of them: And yet none (upon that ground) scruple the engaging of themselves by *solemnne Oaths* (such as the *Oath of Allegiance, Supremacie, &c.* to defend, and maintain them.

But secondly, how ever wee may be ignorant of some  
pay

particulars, yet I suppose the *generals* of both, either are, or may be known by all that are not affectedly ignorant.

3 But thirdly, Take notice that, as for the *Doctrine and Discipline* of the Church of Scotland, wee are not bound to *Observe*, but to *Preserve* it. Not to observe it *here*, but to preserve it *there*, and that onely against the *common Enemies* of both Churches, both Kingdomes. Which is no more, then (for ought I know) wee may engage our selves to doe to any other of the forregne Reformed Churches, notwithstanding their *Doctrine, Worship, Discipline* be not exactly knowne unto us, or (it may be) in some particulars not approved by us.

4 An in the fourth place, As for *Parliament-Priviledges, and Kingdoms-Liberties*, the obligation here layed upon us for the maintaining of them, it bindeth us no further, then as they shall be declared, & evidenced to us to be such. The like whereunto I may say of those ill weeds mention'd in the *second Article, Superstition, Heresie, Schisme*, which we here ingage our selves to endeavour the *Extirpation* of. Here the engagement reacheth not to what ever shall be called by these names, (The *Jews Religion*. *Festus* calls it *Superstition*, Acts 25. The *Christian Religion* by the *Jews* is called *Heresie*, Acts 24. And our *Just separation* from the Church of *Rome*, is by them called *Schisme*,) but what shall be evidenced so to be by the *light* of the *Word*, and consent of the *Churches*.

*Alleg.* 2 But you wil say (in the second place,) Though happilie we may swear in *Judgement*, understanding what we swear to, yet, *how in Justice? how in Righteousnesse?* Here is the Pinche, Seeing there is somewhat in this Covenant, which we engage our endeavours for the extirpation of, which the Law hath planted, If not the Law of God, yet the Law of the Land. It is *Prelacie*, by name a *Plant* (say some) of Gods own *planting*, planted by the hands either of *Christ* himselfe, or his *Apoles*, or at least of *Apostolicall men* in the times of some of the

Acts 25

19.

Acts 24

14.



the Apostle, And as *planted* them, so *watered* by the Churches of Gost in all succeeding ages. And shall we find our selves to endeavour the rooting out of a plant thus *planted*, thus *watered*?

A. Mistake it not. It is not *Prelacy*, (at least not *this Prelacy*,) that ever yet made this *Clayme*. True it is, *Episcopacy* hath done it, (with what right, I leave it to those who are able, to judge,) but *Prelacy* never. *Prelacy* (as the word hath been commonly taken amongst us) for my own part (if I have not mistaken it) I have ever looked upon it as an *Exorbitancy* of *Primitive Episcopacy*, an *Excrecence* from that first *Stem*, and a thing distinct from it. Sure I am, the *Prelacy* here spoken of is: Which, what it is, the next words explaine, viz. the present *Church-Government* by *Arch-Bishops*, *Bishops*, *Chancel-lours*, *Commissaries*, &c. This is our *Prelacy*; The *totum conjunctum*, the whole body of the present *Hierarchy*, being thus clothed, thus *circumstanced*, thus attended with such a *subordination* of *Officers*, some of which (most of which) never yet had the face to plead a *Jus divinum*, or yet *Apostolicum*; neither hath the Church of God at any time found them (to say no more) any such *armies*, *Helpers*, *Governours*, or *1 Cor. 12. 28* (as the new Translation renders it, putting them together) *Helpers in Government*, that it should have any reason to desire the continuance of them. This is the *Prelacy* which wee here ingage our endeavours against.

Not everie, not all kindes of *Prelacie*, or *Episcopacie*. Master Coleman in his Hearts Engagement Preached and published by Order, and Master Cases Quarrell of the Covenant.

(I speake now in the language of others, such as being of Counsell in framing and contriving this Covenant, should know the meaning of it, and no friends to this *Prelacy* I am sure.) Nor *Prelacy* in the latitude of the notion thereof. No. Some materials of *Prelacy*, what ever Government wee have must yet be left. There cannot be a *Parliament* without a *Speaker*, nor yet a *Committee* without a *Chair-man*, nor yet an *Engage-*

or *Jury* without a *Foreman*; Thus in the *State*, and thus in the *Church*. There cannot be a *Synod*, an *Assembly*, a *Classis*, a *Presbytery* without a *deviser*, a *Præses*, a *Primus Presbyter*, one first in Order. And this in the latitude of the word) is *Prelacy*.

Not all *Prelacy* then, nor yet all *Episcopacy*. Paul speaking to the *Elders* at *Ephesus*, and writing to the *Elders* at *Philippi*, he calleth them *ἐπίσκοποι*, *Bishops*. And should it be supposed that *Episcopacie* being *Circumcised* (to use the word of my Author) from these exuberant Members, and Officers; stripped of this unnecessary Equipage, and reduced to the primitive simplicity of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, should by Authority be conceived to be a meet and convenient Government for the Church in this Kingdome, it is not conceived that any man should stand engaged by vertue of this Oath and Covenant to oppose Authority, in endeavouring the extirpation of it; That being not this Government, but a new Government. Now wee doe not swear against what is not. Neither can a man properly be said to endeavour to eradicate that which as yet is not planted. Nay more. Shall there be an *Episcopacie* or *Prelacie* found in the Word as the way of Gospel-Government which Christ hath bequeathed to his Churches, and this be made appears; We are so far from swearing to extirpate such a *Prelacie*, as that rather wee are bound by vertue of this Oath to entertaine it in the minde and will of Iesus Christ. This I have spoken, (not in my own but in others words) not to declare my own private Opinion in this great controversie of the Times, the point of Church-Government, (accounting it in my self in this Juncture of times too high presumption to anticipate or forestall the Judgment of that Venerable Convention, before whom this controversie now depends, expecting a speedy and faire Decision according to the evidence of the Word) but onely to endeavour a Satisfaction to those of my Brethren or others, who possibly may conscientiously stumble at this Stone, the supposed *Fin Divinum*, or *Apostolicum* of *Episcopacie*.



oti. But though a *Jus Divinum* be not stamped upon this Government, yet a *Jus humanum* is. Though it be not of a *Divine foundation*, yet it standeth established by the *Law of the Land*. And being so planted, how can we engage our selves to endeavour the *rooting of it out*.

A. Here, not to dispute what I cannot determine, (nor, as it is supposed, any other) whether it be in every part of it established by the *Law* or no. Let it be yielded that it is. What then? Shall we conceive our selves thereby so concluded and shut up, under this Government, as that what ever inconvenience we shall finde therein, yet we may not by lawfull ways and means, seek, and endeavour the alteration of it. It is a case which *Subjects* scruple not in the *Laws of the Land*; nor yet *Freemen* and *Burgeesses* of a Corporation, or *Members* of the like Society, in the formes of their Government. Though sworn to defend and maintaine them, yet finding by experience some evident and notable inconvenience in them, they will make no scruple (neither need they) to endeavour by lawfull ways, and meanes a Change and alteration in them. *Laws*, and *Ordinances* and *Forms of Government* though very usefull in the first institution of them, yet afterwards, through change of times, they may degenerate, and become unusefull, it may be preiudiciall and detrimētall, crossing that very end for which they were ordained. Thus is it with *humane Laws* and *Constitutions*, the best, the wisest of them, they are like the men that made them, *mutable*; not unlike those *Ignorant*; which will grow *stale* and *soore* with standing. It is the Priviledge of *Gods Laws*, they never degenerate, never prove unusefull, much lesse detrimētall to the persons to whom they are given, and by whom they are observed. But *Humane Laws* and *Constitutions* may, which when they doe, no reason why men should be so irrecoverably concluded under them, as that they should not by lawfull

ways and means (let that still be carried along) seek an alteration for the better.

Q. On the better? I, (may you say) were we assured of that we would not be unwilling with such an exchange. But in the mean time Alterations of this nature are dangerous, as in the State, so in the Church.

A. True, they are so: viz. where they are managed by precipitate or sinister counsels, not carried on with due deliberation, & advice, specially where this exchange is made by Guess and not by Rule: But that (I trust) will not be found to be our condition. If multitudes of unbiassed Counsellors promise safety, (blessed be God) as yet the Kingdom wants them not, whether for Church or State. And with what deliberation they have hitherto proceeded in agitating the businesse of both (specially of the Church) let their Enemies judge, where in their Proposition is (and I think we are bound to believe it) that all shall be done (as need as may be) by Balance. And that not by a Lesbian, leaden Rule, (such as the Rule of Prudence is, which every one may, bow and bend to his own interests) but by the inflexible Rule of the Word. Which if this worke be framed by, we shall have no cause to fear the alteration.

Specially if we consider the condition of the present Church-Government (no Government) amongst us, which indeed is little better then a Nullitie, an Anarchie, a mere name and shadow of Government, the Carcase power (which animates any Government, (being indeed the very soul of it, without which it is but a cadaverous, and livelesse Corps.) being already by an over-ruling hand of a most immediate providence, taken away, and that by unquestionable authority. Now, it is a received Maxim, Better any Government, then no Government: Tyranny then Anarchy. What the inconveniences of the one (the present No-Government) are, the Church of God amongst us already feels to her eminent hazard. What ever the succeeding Go-



ment shall be, yet may wee promise to our selves in it a *comparative happinesse*.

Some other scruples possibly may be started, but I want time now to let slip after them. Neither are they such (I suppose) but that a little *charity* yielding to the present necessity, will soon take them up, affording them a faire construction, and Resolution.

What then remains, but that this first branch of the Exhortation should take place with every of us, that wee would all of us *joyne our selves to the Lord this day in a Covenant, in this Covenant*, the maine drift and scope whereof the Preface and Introduction to it will assure you, is, *The Glory of God, the advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, the Honour and Happinesse of the Kings Majesty, and his Posteritie, the irrevocable publick libertie, safetie and peace of the kingdom.*

And striking this Covenant with God, Let us then (in the second place) be exhorted to be *mindfull of it*. So the Psalmist presseth it upon all the Lords People, 1 Chron. 16. Be ye always *mindful of his Covenant*. None of us here present but have made a Covenant with our God. Upon our admission into the Church to be *visible members* of it, we entred this Covenant, the summe whereof is (as I told you) that *hee should be our God, and we would be his People*. This Covenant many of us, (most of us I suppose) have ratified and confirmed in our receiving of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. Happily some of us (many of us) have upon occasion renewed this Covenant. It may be in some speciall distresse, or upon the receiving of some speciall mercie, wee have laid new engagements upon our souls, binding them with new cords, new Vows, new Resolutions. And this is the service which this day our God by the hand of Authority calls us unto. O let us not then be unmindfull of this Covenant. Take wee heed of forgetting it. It is that which Moses chargeth upon the people, *Deut. 4.*

Vse.

1 Chron.  
16. 15.Jm. V.  
91. 8r

Take

Dent. 4.  
23.

Take heed unto your selves lest ye forget the Covenant of the Lord your God. A Caveat very necessary; this being a thing which we are very subject to forget; and the forgetfulness thereof being of dangerous consequence.

Subject we are to forget it. As for our Covenants with men, we easily remember them; especially if they make for our advantage. But this our Covenant with God, (though most advantageous to us; all the advantage being ours; God is no ways advantaged by our Covenants; They are neither Honour nor Profit to him, both to us. That we may be confederated with the great God of heaven and earth, what an Honour? And that we may be interested in all the promises of this life, and a better, what a Benefit? yet (for all this) how subject are we to forget it? An infirmity which we have drawn from the loyns of our first parents. They being placed in Paradise, in state of Innocence, yet how soon did they forget the Covenant of the Lord their God? This are we much more subject to. A truth which experience will make good to every ones soule.

Numb,  
18.19.

Those Vows and Covenants which some of us have made with our God in time of distresse and trouble, how soon are they forgotten? Not unlike Seamens vows, which in a stresse at Sea they make freely, but no sooner come a shore but they forget all. Such are our Vows and Covenants for the most part which we make in our distresses; Not Covenants of Salt, (such was Gods Covenant with Levi, and such should his peoples Covenants be with him, Covenants for perpetuities) but rather Covenants of Snow, which as soon as ever the Sun shines upon them they presently melt and vanish away. This forgetfulness we are very subject to, and therefore great need of this Caveat; Take heed lest we forget the Covenant of our God.

The forgetfulness whereof (in the second place) is of such dangerous consequence. All sorts to all Evils, and that both  
of



*of sin and Punishment.* See both in our first parents. They forgetting the Covenant made with their God, and so venturing upon the eating of the forbidden fruit (a seal of that Covenant) they thereby let in all those evils which have overrun and drowned all their posterity; even a deluge of sin and misery.

1. No such an inlet to evils of sin as this. Whence is it that Christians, (I mean nominall Christians) they dare let loose the reins to licentiousness, yielding up themselves servants to sin and Satan in the obeying and fulfilling of divers inordinate Lusts, in adventuring upon fowle, and (it may be) scandalous evils? Certainly they have forgotten the Covenant, of their God. It is that which the wise man sayes of the Adulterous woman, *Pro. 2. 16* *She forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the Covenant of her God.* The latter a Reason of the former. *She forsaketh the guide of her youth.* giveth over herselfe to adulterous loves, and in chaste embraces of strangers. Why? Shee hath forgotten the Covenant of her God; that is, her conjugall vow, and promise made in the presence of God. And whence is it (my brethren) that our hearts generally are so ready to run out inordinately after the Creatures, bestowing those affections upon them which wee owe peculiarly to God and Iesus Christ? Surely we have forgot, at least do not, as we ought, remember the Covenant of the Lord our God, wherein we have ingaged our selves to take him for our God, to set him up in our hearts, to love him, feare him, honour him, trust in him above all other things.

2. No such an inlet to the Evils of Punishment. For this cause it is that God threatens his people with the sword (of temporall judgements the worst) *I will bring a sword upon you that shall* *Levit. 26* *avenge the quarrell of my Covenant.* What was the Quarrell of his Covenant? Why they had forgotten it, and forgetting had violated it. This lets in the sword, and with it Pestilence, and

and *Famine*; as attendants upon it, (as it followeth in the next words.) Of such dangerous consequence is it to forget this Covenant which we have made.

On the other hand, the *Remembrance* of it is of great use. Usefull in *restraining* us from *sin*; Usefull in *putting* us on to *duty*. In the one a *Bridle*, in the other a *Spur*; both ways very usefull.

And therefore (in the fear of God) give way also to this second branch of the Exhortation. *Remember wee the Covenant of the Lord your God*. This it is that the Lord here in the Text putteth his people in minde of, giving them a hint of the Covenant which they had forgotten, that being put in minde of it, they would be *faithfull* in it, not thinking that *Ceremonies*, and *Sacrifices*, and those externall observances would serve the turn, but that they would apply themselves to performe the *Conditions* of the Covenant.

*Use 3.* And this let every of vs (in the third and last place) be excited to doe. So *Remember wee the Covenant of our God*, that we may be *faithfull* in it. Faithfull in performing the *conditions* of our part; the summe whereof is bound up in this one word, *Obedience*.

True it is indeed, when we have done all we can do, yet we shall fall short of that *exactnes* of Obedience, which the Law requireth; there will be many *failings*, many *infirmities*. But let not these discourage; knowing this for our comfort, that these failings, where they are not *allowed*, but *bewailed*, and striven against, they are not properly a *breach* of this Covenant. The Covenant that Gods Saints are under (being in Christ) it is not a Covenant of *Works*, but a Covenant of *Grace*. In the first Covenant the condition of our parts was, an *exact* and *perfect* obedience, so as the least failing, the least deviation or swerving from the *Rule* was a breach of that Covenant. But this Covenant it is established upon *better promises*, and



and better conditions; the Lord herein requiring from us not  
*Exactnesse* but *Truth, Sincerity, Uprightnesse*. Walk before me, *Gen. 17.*  
 and be upright. So as every failing, every straying from the  
 Rule is not a Breach of Covenant, so long as the heart is upright  
 with God, not allowing it self in any known evill, any sinfull  
*Commission, or Omission*. These are the breaches of this Co-  
 venant when the heart shall sit loose from God, taking in any  
 sinfull lusts to give entertainment to them. And this take we  
 heed of. How ever there may be, and will be many slips, ma-  
 ny failings in our course; yet take heed of sins against *Light,*  
 against *Conscience*. Take heed of letting in, and setting up any  
 sinfull lust in our hearts against the *Convictions* of the Word.  
 This were indeed to deal *falsly* with God in his Covenant. A  
 Crime which the Church washeth her hands of, *Psal. 44.*  
*All this is come upon us, yet have we not dealt falsly in thy Covenant.* *Psal. 44.*  
 At that time the Church lay under great pressutes, great affli- *17.*  
 ctions. *All this is come upon us, All these evils, these sufferings.*  
 Yet she professeth her integrity. *She had not dealt falsly in the*  
*Covenant.* What is that? The next words explaine it.  
*Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy*  
*way.* This it is to deal *falsly* in the Covenant. When a mans *Verse 18*  
 heart is turned back, and thereupon his steps decline from the  
 way of Gods Commandements, so as hee walketh on in any  
 sinfull way. O (my Brethren) let it not be layed to the charge  
 of any of us, that we should thus deal *falsly* in the Covenant  
 of our God. And therefore, though *perfect* wee cannot be,  
 yet labour we to be *upright and sincere*. Let not our hearts be  
 turned back from our God, but let us walke before him in the  
 constant, and conscionable endeavour of an universall obedience.  
 Thus remembering and keeping our Covenant with God, now  
 be we assured, that God will remember his Covenant with us. He  
 remembereth his Covenant for ever, saith the Psalmist in that *Pf. 105.*  
 105. Psalm, which Text if we compare with the forenamed 8.  
 place.

1 Chron.  
15.

place. 1 Chron. 16. where the former part of this Psalm is recorded, and from whence it is taken, wee may take notice of an observable difference in the reading of this passage. In the Psalm, the words run in the *third person*, as spoken of God, *He remembereth*. In the *Chronicles* you have them in the *second person*, as spoken to his People. *Remember ye*. Put them together, they will afford us this usefull observation. That if we Remember our Covenant with God, God will remember his Covenant with us; And because he Remembereth his Covenant for ever, therefore let us Remember it for ever. Herein God for his part will not be forgetfull, unfaithfull. It is the first branch of Solomons

2 Chron.  
6. 14.

prayer at the Dedication of the Temple. O Lord God of Israel there is no God like unto thee; &c. Which keepest covenant and mercy to thy servants, that walke before thee with all their hearts. Make it.

Verse 15.

Though there may be many slips and failings in the walkings of Gods people, their foot may often tread awry, yet walking before God with all their hearts, in uprightness and sincerity, the Lord will keep Covenant with them, and shew mercy to them in pardoning their sins, accepting their services, healing their infirmities supplying their wants; performing unto them all the conditions of the Covenant on his part. What he hath spoken with his mouth, he will performe it with his hand (as it followeth in the next Verse.) And therefore let all our care and solicitude be, how to performe the Conditions on our part. How we may keep close to God, and walk before him. Walk before me and be upright. This is that which wee have bound our selves to by Baptisme, and confirmed in the Lords Supper. And this is one main thing which wee are now to engage our selves unto in this Covenant which wee are now to enter. So much you shall finde in the Close of it, the last Article, (which you may observe to be set forth in a different Character, (as I conceive it) purposely to set a note of observation upon it) the summe whereof is *Personal Reformation*, the Reformation of our own Hearts, Lives, Families. Now every

of.



of us (in the fear of God) have a speciall eye upon this, looking upon it in the first place, though here set last, beginning our practice, where the Covenant ends (as it is the Rule of *Genesis*, and *Analysis*). Every one beginning at and with himself, each one *indeavouring* (as the words of the Article run) to goe before another in the example of a real *Reformation*. Having practised upon our selves first, our owne *Hearts*, *Lives*, *Families*; Then be we, as we may, all of us in our places, and according to the opportunities offered us, subservient unto the *Publick* indeavouring to promote the great work of a *Publick Reformation* of what is amisse in *Church*, or *State*; which wee are to doe, all of us by our *Prayers*; those that have abilities, by their *Purses*; those which are called to it, by their *Counsels*; *Magistrates* by their *Authority*; *Ministers* by their *Doctrine*; *People* by their *Obedience*. This doe we for the generall.

Withall, having an eye to the severall particulars contained in this Covenant, which may any wayes conduce unto that great and blessed end, the *establishment* of the true Religion of God amongst us, with the *restoring* and *setting* of a true peace, and *happinesse* both in *Church* and *State*.

And to that end let mee direct your eyes to three or foure particulars of great consequence, tending directly to that end. You find them altogether in foure words of the second Article, where we engage our selves to endeavour the extirpation (as of *Papery* and *Prelacy*) two things obvious to every eye; ) so, of *Usurpation*, *Heresie*, *Schisme*, *Profaneness*. Foure words of great importance. Happily some of you do not so clearly understand the meaning of some of them. Give mee leave to touch upon them a little, that you may both know them, and your duty concerning them.

1. *Superstition*, *idol-worship*, when men shall worship God by ways, and meanes of their owne devising, establishing their owne *Traditions*, Teaching for *Doctrines*; the commandments of man: *Mat. 15. 3, 6, 9.*

Introducing humane Inventions into the Room of Divine Ordinance, making them either Parts or Mediums a Part or Means of Divine Worship, Teaching, or practizing the fear of God by the precepts of men. This is Superstition, whereof what ever reliicks may be found amongst us, and evidenced to be such, we all stand obliged by vertue of this Covenant to seeke and endeavour by lawfull ways and meanes the Abolition and Ex-  
*Job. 29. 13* *terpation* of them.

The second and third wee may put them together (being neer akin, *Cosen German*;) Heresie and Schisme: The one an error in Judgement, the other in Practice.

*Heretic*. An erroneous opinion touching some Article and principle of the Christian Faith, obstinately maintained against the evidence of the word. This is properly Heresie to which there are these three things required. 1. It must be an error about some Article of Christian faith, which is either of, or near the foundation. 2. It must be an error evident to be such by the light of the Scriptures, and generall consent of the Churches. 3. It must be an error obstinately maintained and pertinaciously held after conviction and lawfull admonition. Put these together they make up formall Heresie; Heresie properly so called. An evil weed, not to be suffered in the Garden of God. One of those *works of the flesh* which Saint Paul speaketh of, *Gal. 5.* The  
*Gal. 5. 20* *works of the flesh are Heresies*. Of dangerous consequence, pernicious, not only to the person tainted with it, but to the Church wherein it is tolerated. An infectious evil spreading Gangrene of a diffusive nature, very apt to spread and communicate it selfe, insinuating it selfe into the breasts and bowels of men, for the most part, by way of fair and smooth pretences and enticements. The Whore of *Babylon*, *Cap.* wherein shee giveth her poyson to drinke as is a *Golden Cup*. In this respect (amongst others) it is that Heresie is elsewhere in the Revelation compared to *barabane*, *Revel. 14.* Those which follow the Lambe,  
 (the



(the true professors of the Gospel) they are said to be such as *were not defiled with women, for they are Virgins.* The simplicity and purity of the Orthodox faith, that is virginity. Heresie is *whoredome*; A secretly enticing, sutablely seducing evill; conveying it selfe (as *poysons* for the most part are) with some *sweete mixtures*, the mixtures of some sweet and precious truths. And surely such are some of those *Errours* which fly abroad in the world at this day. That (amongst other) of *Antinomianisme*, which under a colour of *exalting of Christ*, & *setting up free grace* (the most glorious pretext in the world) trample upon *Moses*, beating downe the *Law*, that Law which *Christ* came to establish, not allowing it any *directive* power, to be so much as a *Rule of our obedience*, withall, taking away all *sense and conscience of sin* (as sin) in the *Regenerate*, An Heresie of that dangerous consequence, that unlesse it be extirpated, and rooted out, it will endanger the eating out the heart, and bowels of all true Religion.

3 *Schisme*. The word signifieth a *Rending*, a *taring*, (*σχίζω*, a *σχίσμα*) and it is nothing but a *Rending and taring* of the *Unity of the Church*. As when men shall make *divisions*, and *factions* in a Church, breaking it into pieces, and parts. Such were those *Schismes* in the Church of *Corinth*, (to the Apostle calleth them, *I beseech you brethren that there be no divisions amongst you*: *I Cor. I. 10.* *ἡμεῖς*; (saith the Originall) *Schismes*) where some were followers of *Paul*, others of *Apollon*, a third of *Cephus*, a fourth of *Christ*, so breaking the unitie of that body, that Church. Or when any shall separate from Communion with a true Church. Such a Separation (saith our Learned Doctor *Ames*) by a speciall appropriation *Ames* *Cas.* *most rightly deserves the name of Schisme.*

Which yet must be warily and tenderly understood. Not that every withdrawing from some particular act, or act of Communion with a Church, wherein men conceive that they

they cannot participate without sin, should be presently called, and accounted a *Schisme*. It was the Case of many of late times in the point of *Kneeling* at the Sacrament: They durst not hold communion with the Church in that particular *act*, because of that *Gesture*, about which they were not satisfied. This *partiall*, and *praevisible*, withdrawing, merely out of *tenderneffe of Conscience*, cannot properly be called *Schisme*, so long as the Church is still *owned* and *acknowledged*, and communion held with it in the *way*. But, where there is a *totalis secessio*, a *total* departure and *Separation*, an absolute renouncing and rejecting of all Fellowship and Communion with a Church, a *true Church*, and that upon this ground, because they adjudge it to be *no Church*, or an *imperfect* and *defective Church*, defective in her *Constitution*, or *Administrations*, and *Ordinances*, Certainly, if there be any *Schisme* in the world this is *Schisme*, and that most properly so called.

An *evil weed* also, no lesse dangerous then the former. Some comparing them together, *Herésie* and *Schisme*, have aggravated this above the other, as conceiving it to be the more dangerous of the two.

And surely dangerous it is, not onely to the *person* himselfe who maketh this *Schisme*, who hereby

1. *Excommunicates himself*, cuts off himself from Fellowship, and Communion with the Church and People of God; depriving himself of *Church-Priviledges*, as also of the *public Ordinances*, the means of his *Edification* and *salvation*, to which God hath promised a *speciall concurrence*.

2. Besides, *running out of the fold*, hee thereby exposeth himself to the *Wolfe*. And hence it is that those which have made such a *total secession*, and *separation*, they seldom stay there, but are carried on to further and more dangerous error, as to grosse *Idolatry*, and *Superstition*, and what not.

3. But dangerous also the *Contumacie*, to the *Body of the Church*



*Church*, which by this means is rent and torn, and *dismembred*. Which what it is to the *Naturall body*, what *danger*, and what *Torment*, they which have felt it, can tell. I wish they which stand guiltie of this evill were but as apprehensive and sensible of what it is to the *mysticall body*, how *detrimentall*, how *dangerous*: What it is thus to *divide Christ*, thus to *despise* and *contume the Church of God*, (or *despise yee the Church of God* as *Paul* to some of his *Corinthians*); A thing of sadder Consequence, then I believe it is generally apprehended by most of those, who upon every slight dislike, presently fall to *Partiall*, and from *Partiall* to *Totall Separation*. The Lord heal these breaches.

I Cor. II.  
22.

In the mean time, who ever they are that have taken, or shall take this *Covenant*, let them take notice, how by vertue hereof they stand ingaged to endeavour the *Extirpation* of both these evill weeds, *Heresie*, and *Schisme*. A charge which as it lyeth upon all, so after especiall manner upon *publike Person*, *Magistrates* and *Ministers*. If wee then speake against both the one and the other, you must beare with us: It is no more then we are bound to do. And if you that have *Authority* in your hands, do not improve it; for the suppressing, and eradicating of both, see you to it, for my part I doe not see how you can be acquitted of this *Oath*, wherein the obligation is so exprest, that you shall endeavour the extirpation as of *Heresie*, so of *Schisme*.

4. The fourth and last is *Prophanessee*. A bitter and poysonous weed. A *Roote that beareth Gall and Wormewood* (as you have it described, *Deut. 29.*) Such a *Roote* none will suffer to grow in their *Gardens*, much lesse God in his. O let it bee the joynt endeavour of all and every of us to pull it up, to roote it out, *Private persons*, every one roote it out of his own, *Heart*, *Mouth*, *Life*, *Parents* and *Masters* roote it out their

Deut. 29  
18.

*Families, not suffering it to grow within their walls. Every one taking up Davids and Joshuabs resolution. He that wor-  
 keth devill shall not dwell within my house, hee that telleth lies shall not  
 carry in my sight, Psal. 101. As for me and my house wee will serve the  
 Lord. Josh. last. Ministers endeavour to root it out of their  
 Congregations, laying the Axe of the Word to the Root of  
 it. Magistrates to root it out of their Jurisdictions, and that  
 by a due execution of the Law upon publick offendours. Such  
 Laws you have divers, Laws against Swearing, against Drun-  
 kennesse, against Sabbath-breaking, &c. all branches of the same  
 Root, Profanenesse. Now take ye notice of it, that this Co-  
 venant bindeth you to a more strict, and impartiall execution  
 of those Laws, then ever heretofore. Thus joining together,  
 Word, and Sword, Ministers and Magistrates, there may be  
 some hope of extirpating of this bitter and deadly weed, which  
 hath overrun and almost overspread the whole Garden of God,  
 being so rife in every City, every Town. And that that being  
 extirpated, and rooted out, Piety and true Religion may come  
 to put up head, and flourish. Which let it be the Joynt desire,  
 and mayn Designe of every one that either hath, or shall joyn  
 himself to the Lord in this Covenant.*

FINIS



The L. Fairfax's victory at Selby, And an exall List Numb. 47  
of the Commanders and Officers taken there.  
The suppression of M<sup>r</sup> James's insurrection in Scotland.  
A full relation of the proceedings against the Archb. of Canterbury.



Sir Thomas

Fairfax.

**Mercurius Civicus.**  
**LONDON'S**  
**INTELLIGENCER.**

OR,  
Truth impartially related from  
thence to the whole Kingdome,  
to prevent mis-information.

From Thursday April 11. to Thursday April 18. 1644.



Our last and certaine news from Yorkshire deserves the  
first place in this Intelligence, which as it was infor-  
med by a speciall Messenger sent from Sir Thomas  
Fairfax to the Parliament on Wednesday last April  
17. it followeth: that upon the advance of the Lord  
Fairfax from Hull, with 20 Troops of Horse on  
Friday was sevensight last he joyned with Sir Tho. Fairfax and Col.  
Lambert,